

JAN 24 2007

REMARKS

The enclosed is responsive to the Examiner's Final Office Action mailed on September 25, 2006. At the time the Examiner mailed the Office Action claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 11-32, 35, 37, 38 and 41-46 were pending. By way of the present response the Applicants have: 1) amended claims 1, 31, and 41; 2) added no new claims; and 3) canceled claims 11-30 and 42-46. As such, claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 31-32, 35, 37, 38 and 41 are now pending. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application and the allowance of all claims now presented.

Claim Objections

Claims 1 and 31 are objected to because of informalities. Applicants have amended the claims as per Examiner's suggestion so as to make claims 1 and 31 allowable. Applicants respectfully submit that no amendments have been made to the claims that add any new matter. The amendments are merely implementations of the Examiner's suggestions to overcome the objections to the claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

Examiner states that claims 1-2, 5, 7-8, 31-32, 35, and 37-38 would be allowable upon resolution of the objections to independent claims 1 and 31 above stated. Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to independent claims 1 and 31 have been resolved by merely implementing Examiner's

suggested amendments. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-2, 5, 7-8, 31-32, 35, and 37-38 are in condition for allowance.

Examiner further states that claim 46 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 46 depended from claims 41-45. Therefore, Applicants have included all of the features of claims 42-46 in claim 41 and have canceled claims 42-46. Applicants have further attempted to ensure correctness of antecedent bases of claim 41 by merely implementing Examiner's suggested amendments for claims 1 and 31 to overcome all claim objections. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added to claim 41 through the amendments. Applicants have merely followed Examiner's suggestion of placing allowed claim 46 in independent form by adding all of the features of claims 42-46 to claim 41 and attempting to ensure that antecedent bases of claim 41 is correct. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 41 is also in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections

35 U.S.C. 103(a) Rejections

Claims 11-14 and 16-28, 30 and 41-45 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Basso, et al., U.S. Publication No. 2002/0144634 (hereinafter "Basso"), Tezuka, U.S. Patent No. 6,658,014 (hereinafter "Tezuka"), Gulick, U.S. Patent No. 4,809,269 (hereinafter "Gulick"), and further in view of Hooper, U.S. Publication No. 2003/0043803 (hereinafter "Hooper").

Claims 15, 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Basso, Tezuka, Gulick and Hooper as applied to claims 11, 13, 14, 24, 27, 28 above, and further in view of Chow et al. (Patent No. US 6,269,081 B1).

Applicants have canceled claims 11-14, 16-28, 30, and 41-45 without prejudice to put the application in condition for allowance. In reference to canceled claims 11-14, 16-28, and 30, Applicants reserve the right to seek protection of the claims in a continuation application.

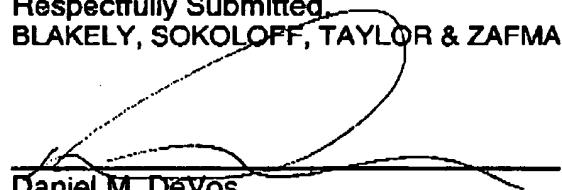
In light of the comments above, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of all claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that all rejections have been overcome and that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

If there are any additional charges, please charge them to our Deposit Account Number 02-2666. If a telephone conference would facilitate the prosecution of this application, Examiner is invited to contact Daniel M. DeVos at (408) 720-8300.

Respectfully Submitted,
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11

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